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The President's Daily Brief

June 19, 1976

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Exempt from general
declassification schedule of E.O. 11652
exemption category 5B(1)(2)(3)
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the Director of Central Intelligence

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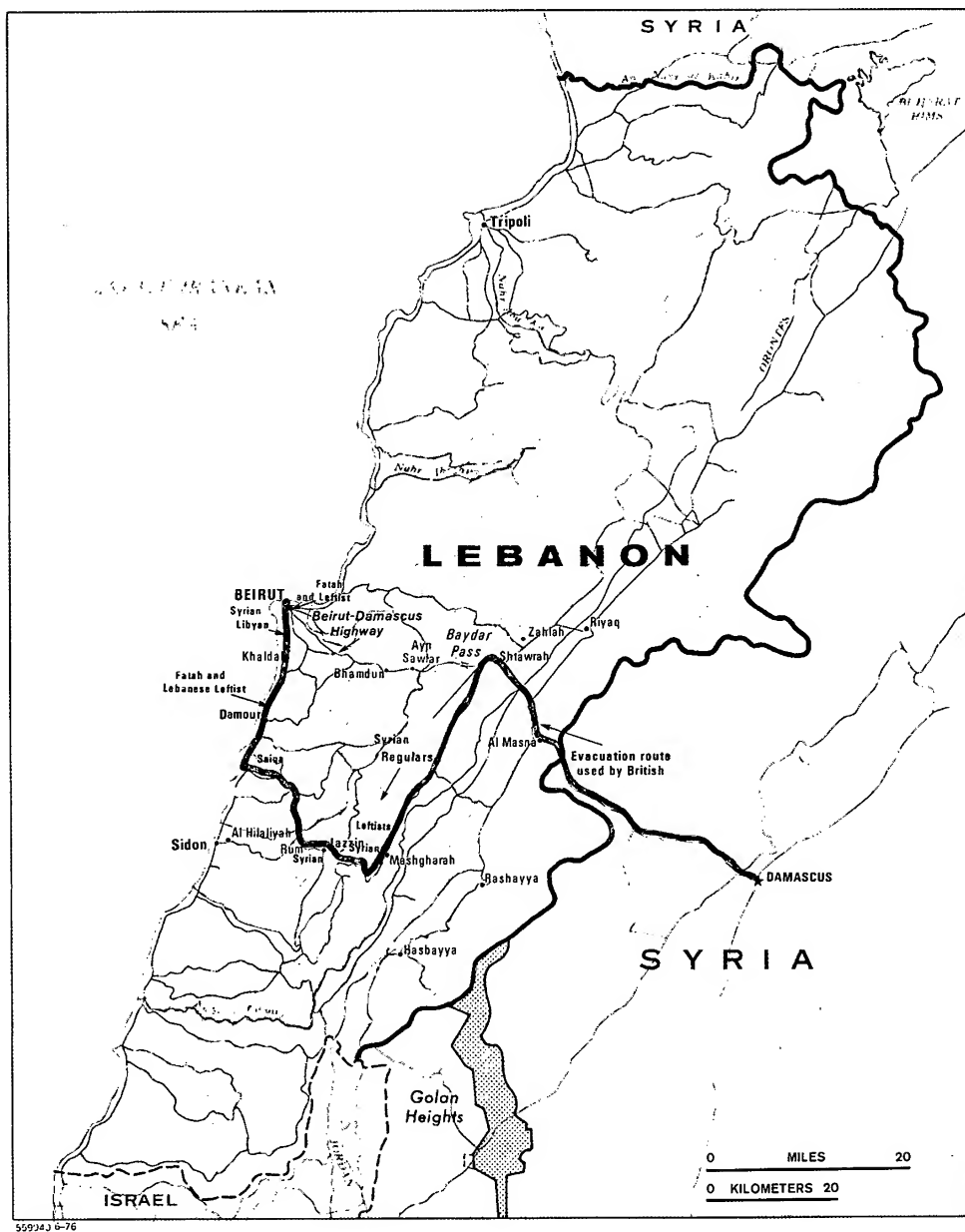
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LEBANON: We have no independent evidence to support the Palestinian contention that security conditions have deteriorated to such an extent that the Palestinians could not guarantee the safety of the evacuation convoy from Beirut.

Further Syrian and Iraqi troop movements occurred yesterday.

We now have firm evidence that Egypt is encouraging Iraq's current effort to intimidate Syria.

The Palestinians are probably trying to make political gains for themselves by drawing out the negotiations on the convoy's departure.

Palestinian leaders presumably hope they can prompt the US to abandon plans for a land convoy and instead use Beirut airport. They might think this would lead to a dilution of Syrian control of the airport and permit an early introduction of the Arab League security force.

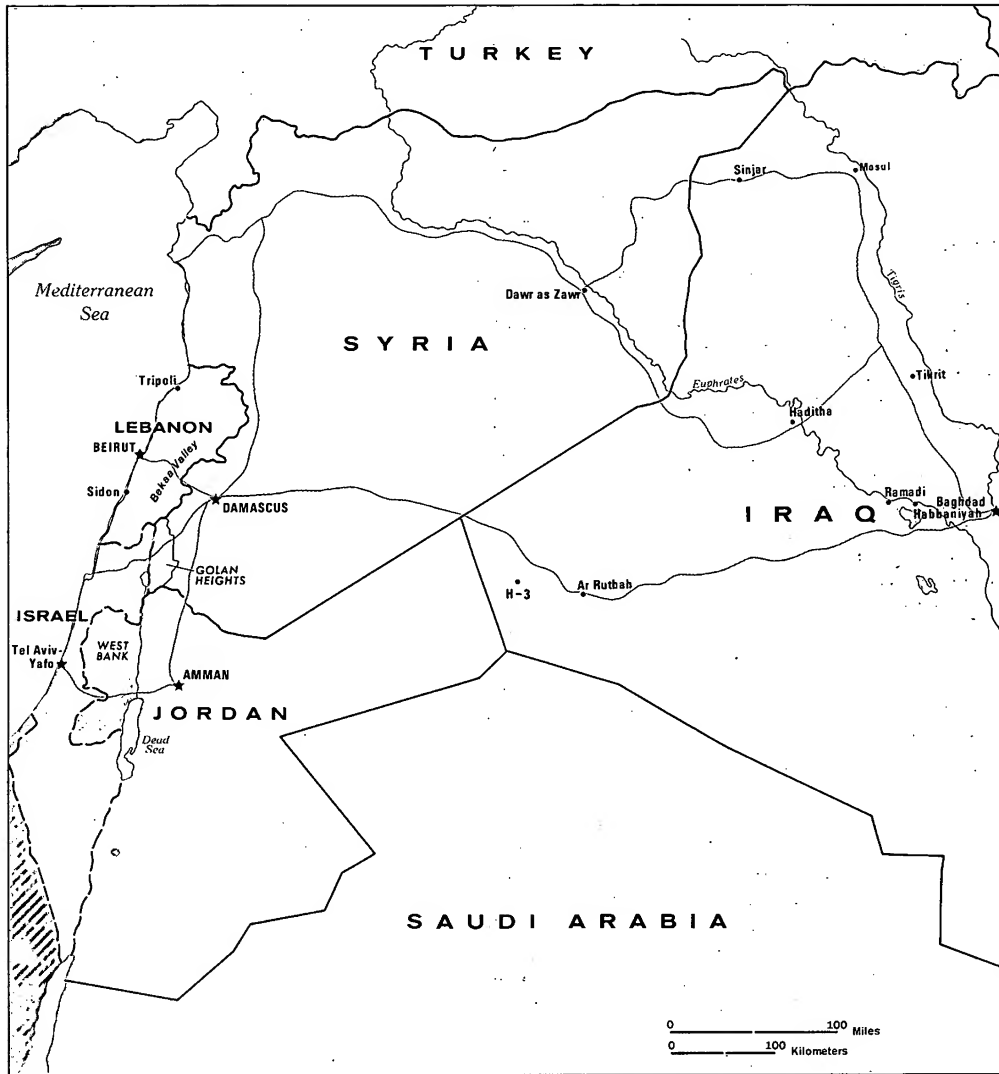
The US embassy reports that additional Syrian troops have entered Lebanon. The troops probably came from units that have been deployed along the Lebanese border.

Press reports state that the Iraqi armed forces chief of staff bade farewell in Baghdad to Iraqi units advancing west "to perform their national duty." This is the third time the Iraqis have staged a public ceremony to dramatize the movement of forces toward the Syrian border.

We now estimate that more than 50,000 troops are in western Iraq. Additional units continue to move westward.

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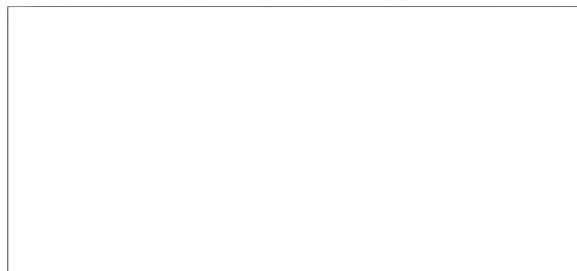


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Sadat appears to have been prompted by his feud with Damascus and by the need to respond to appeals this week from Palestinian and Lebanese leftists for help in countering Syria's military operations. Cairo had already announced that it would not intervene directly.

The Soviets are continuing to monitor the movement of US naval units in the Mediterranean.

The US amphibious task group southwest of Cyprus is being followed by a frigate. Southeast of Crete, the USS America carrier task group is under surveillance by five Soviet surface ships and a cruise-missile submarine. The commander of the Soviet Mediterranean Squadron is aboard a cruiser with this group. There are now about 63 Soviet submarines and ships of all types in the Mediterranean.



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ITALY: The election campaign ended yesterday, and voters are observing the traditional one-day "pause for reflection" before casting ballots tomorrow or on Monday.

Voters who have not made up their minds--polls suggest that 10 to 20 percent were still undecided near the end of the campaign--will be reflecting mainly on the conflicting arguments advanced during the campaign about what it would mean to give the Communists a larger role in national politics.

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There are indications that Communist leader Berlinguer provoked considerable criticism within his party by saying earlier in the week that he felt "more secure" in NATO than he would outside of the alliance. He implied that Italia^{25X1} membership in NATO protected his party from Soviet interference.



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The formation of a government after the election, which promises to be difficult in any event, could be complicated by an election technicality that raises the possibility of a stronger showing for the left in the Chamber than in the Senate. Approximately 5 million voters between the ages of 18 and 25 are eligible to vote only for the Chamber and are likely to give strong support to the left.

Most observers expect a result similar to that of the regional elections a year ago, in which the Christian Democrats, with just over 35 percent, got a narrow margin over the Communists--while the Socialists placed third with 12 percent. The recent volatility of the electorate, however, and the large numbers of undecided voters place all projections in doubt.

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Fragmentary returns should be available by noon on Monday, Washington time. The final vote and seat distribution may not be known until Tuesday morning.

The voters will be electing 630 deputies and 315 senators. Eligible voters cast ballots for both races during a single visit to the polls on Sunday or Monday. Slightly more than 40 million citizens are eligible to vote in the Chamber election and about 35 million for the Senate.

Participation has only once fallen below 90 percent in the six preceding postwar parliamentary elections. There is no provision for absentee ballot.

The government subsidizes travel to the town of official residence if a voter is working elsewhere in Italy and, in the case of Italians residing overseas, travel from the Italian border to their official residence. The West German government is making it possible for several hundred thousand Italian workers resident in West Germany to return free-of-charge to Italy to vote.

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NOTES

Soviet leader Brezhnev has been maintaining a busy schedule. In his most recent public appearances, he has seemed in better form than when he first returned to work in late April after a lengthy absence.

In the last month, Brezhnev generally has worked seven or more hours a day. During the same period he apparently conducted all three Politburo meetings, including an unusual four-hour session on June 3 that was attended by full and candidate members who reside outside Moscow.

Brezhnev appeared in good spirits and fully relaxed during Indian Prime Minister Gandhi's recent visit. Television coverage of Brezhnev's public activities has resumed.

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The Soviets apparently are preparing to launch a military version of the Salyut space station, Salyut 5, possibly early next week. A Soyuz spacecraft probably will be launched within two weeks to carry cosmonauts to the space station.

Salyut 5 is likely to function as an operational intelligence collector and as a test vehicle for various experimental systems. Soviet cosmonauts recently stated that it will have two docking ports and will be able to support as many as six cosmonauts simultaneously.

These features would enable the Soviets to send up replacement crews and supplies in ferry vehicles, and thereby extend the space station's life. This would be a major step toward Moscow's goal of establishing large, long-term manned space stations.

Salyut 5 probably will be manned initially by a two-man crew for about 90 days. The present manned space record is 84 days, set by the US Skylab 3 in 1974. The Soviet record of 63 days was set last year.

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Cuba

Congo

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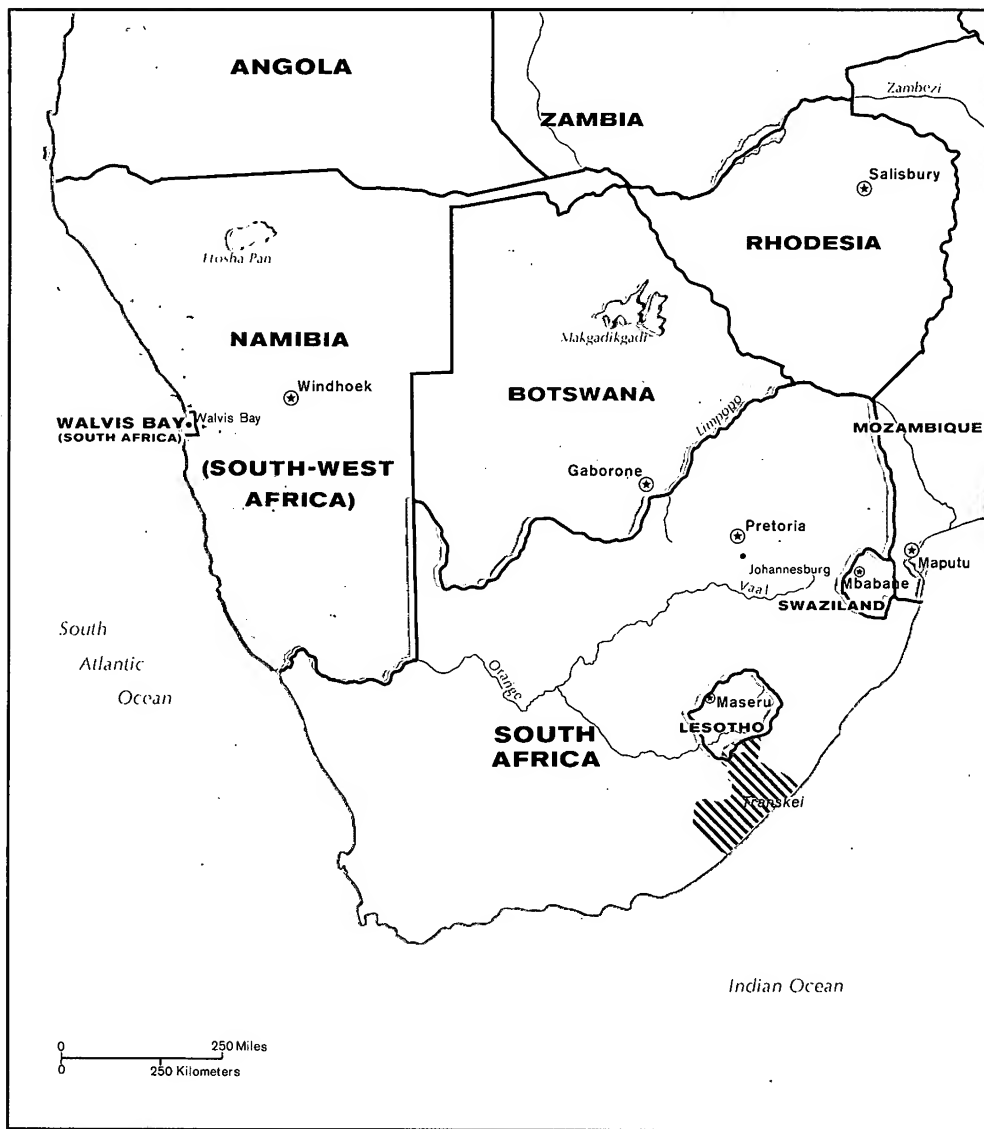
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The killing yesterday of Argentina's federal police chief General Cardozo was the fourth attack on a military man by leftist terrorists in the past week.

The terrorists hope their violence will provoke such a harsh response from the security forces that the public will turn against the government. Although President Videla thus far has resisted calls from "hard-line" officers for the use of stronger measures against the terrorists, each additional act of violence gives greater weight to the officers' arguments.

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SOUTH AFRICA

Prime Minister John Vorster, who is to meet with Secretary Kissinger in Germany on June 23, is the unrivaled leader of South Africa's ruling National Party. The party represents the bulk of the Afrikaners--descendants of the 17th century European settlers who now comprise some 60 percent of the white population.

During the past two years Vorster has intensified his efforts to open discreet dialogues with leaders of black African states. Having talked at length with the presidents of Ivory Coast, Senegal, Liberia, and Zambia, he is aware that none of the important black leaders are likely to collaborate openly with his government unless it stops supporting white rule in Rhodesia, starts to prepare Namibia (South-West Africa) for early independence, and begins to make some basic changes in South Africa itself.

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He has promised some softening of living conditions for urban blacks, but only within the context of apartheid.

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Vorster's collaboration with four black African presidents in efforts to mediate the Rhodesian problem was the most promising breakthrough for his informal diplomacy, but the collapse of the settlement talks clearly showed its limitations. So long as a political solution seemed possible, Vorster was willing to press Prime Minister Smith, and his prodding held the Rhodesian leader to grudging negotiations with the black nationalists from late 1974 to early 1976.

Now that the talks have failed and a full-blown insurgency is developing, however, Vorster is unlikely to take the steps that would bring Smith to his knees, such as an embargo on economic support. Any move that suggests compliance with the UN sanctions program against Rhodesia would be anathema to white South Africans.

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The adverse international reactions to the South African intervention in Angola have at least temporarily discouraged moderate African leaders from further dealings with Vorster. At home, however, the Angolan venture apparently has not seriously affected Vorster's political influence. In late January, in the midst of the Angolan involvement, Vorster won a parliamentary vote of confidence.

Namibia

Vorster is pushing a program of self-determination for Namibia that is unacceptable to the UN and the Organization of African Unity. Pretoria's goal for the territory appears to be independence under a loose federal system that would maintain control by whites of the territory's principal resources.

The Namibian constitutional conference that was convened last year consists of delegates representing nine indigenous tribes, two mulatto groups, and the white settlers. The South-West African People's Organization, the only Namibian nationalist group recognized by the UN and the OAU, is not participating. Vorster himself has shown no inclination to nudge the white delegates toward broadening non-white participation.

Bantustans

In his dialogues with African presidents, Vorster has pointed out that Transkei, one of the eight self-governing Bantustans--tribal homelands--in South Africa proper, is to become fully independent next October 26. The remainder of South African blacks eventually are supposed to attain independence in their own Bantustans. Official publicity glosses over the facts that Transkei is the only homeland to have a consolidated territorial base, that all tribal homelands amount to only 13.7 percent of South Africa's territory, and that planned consolidation programs are mere reassortments of land fragments within the overall quota.

The Bantustan program is intended to remove the bulk of the black population from the urban areas to the homelands. Pretoria has heavily subsidized "border industries" and other projects designed to create jobs for blacks in or near the homelands. Nevertheless, the extensive industrial growth since the Nationalists came to power in 1948 has accelerated the aggregation of blacks in the major urban areas.

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Urban Blacks

The net result of the gap between apartheid doctrine and economic realities is that most urban blacks lead a precarious squatter's existence. Vorster has not proposed any basic change in the controls that are intended to restrict blacks to their tribal homelands unless they are regularly employed. He also has not shown readiness to repeal the labor codes that reserve skilled industrial jobs for whites and exclude black trade unions from legally sanctioned collective bargaining.

The continual tightening of repressive measures against all spontaneous non-white activities that might have political potential contrasts sharply with Vorster's toleration of some carping from authorized spokesmen, such as the homeland chiefs or the Colored Persons Representative Council. Although relatively few non-white groups have been banned outright, they have been rendered impotent by detaining or banning individual activists as soon as they show their heads.

The absence of genuinely representative organizations among urban blacks and the lack of open channels for expressing their aspirations or grievances breeds tensions that sometimes erupt in demonstrations and riots, such as the events of this week.

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